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**ACANTHOSTICHUS (CTENOPYGA) TOWNSENDI
(ASHM.), A SYNONYM OF ACANTHOSTICHUS
TEXANUS FOREL (HYMENOPTERA:
FORMICIDAE).**

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In 1904 Forel described the ant *Acanthostichus texanus* from a dealated female collected at Brownsville, Texas, by H. F. Wickham. Little is known about the circumstances of the collection. The record was unique, however, as this was the first time that an *Acanthostichus* had been found within the borders of the United States, all members of this Neotropical genus being previously known only from South America. Two years later Ashmead described the monotypic genus *Ctenopyga*, designating as type *townsendi*, which he based on two males and a dealated female collected by C. H. T. Townsend in La Puerta (state not given, but probably Chihuahua), Mexico. On October 24, 1942, William F. Buren collected two dealated females of *texanus* at Rio Grande City (Starr County), Texas. Since the type of *texanus*, which should have been in the Natural History Museum at Geneva, Switzerland, had been lost Buren determined his material from Forel's description. Later Buren gave one of the individuals to Dr. W. S. Creighton and the other to the United States National Museum. I have had the privilege of studying both and fully agree with Buren's determination of them as *texanus*.

Recently it occurred to me that *townsendi* might well be a synonym of *texanus*. I therefore compared the two females collected by Buren with the type female of *townsendi* and found that, except for some insignificant differences such as color and pilosity, they are identical. A partly dealated female collected by Creighton 10 miles west of Boca Chica (Cameron County), Texas, compared in a similar manner also proved to be *texanus*. I had previously compared a number of males in the collection of the United States National Museum from several localities in Texas with male types of *townsendi* and found them to be this species (for details see list below). Basing my judgement upon these data, I have no hesitancy in synonymizing *townsendi* with *texanus*.

Among specimens very kindly loaned me for study by Dr. Creighton is a single worker of *Acanthostichus* which he collected at the

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Forestry Cabin, Baboquivari Mountains, Arizona, 3,500 feet, on July 26, 1951. This might well be the worker of *texanus*, but I would be hesitant to describe it as such for at least two reasons: first, the worker is not associated with the known female or male; and second, it has a mandible with at least two distinct teeth, whereas the mandible of the female of *texanus* has no teeth.

Since the biology of *texanus* is unknown and the worker yet undescribed, an investigation of this species would seem to be a worthwhile project for some formicologist. Only one other North American *Acanthostichus* is known, and that is *skwarrae* Whlr., described from a single worker collected at Tamarindo, State of Vera Cruz, Mexico (1934, Harvard Univ., Bull. Mus. Compar. Zool. 77 (5): 161-162). Upon the basis of the worker alone, it is impossible to know whether or not this species belongs to the subgenus *Ctenopyga*.

Below are listed all important references pertaining to *texanus* as well as all locality records available to me.

Acanthostichus (Ctenopyga) texanus Forel

Acanthostichus texanus Forel, 1904, Ann. Soc. Ent. de Belg. 48: 168-169, *dealate female*, Brownsville, Texas, H. F. Wickham. (Type should be in the Museum of Natural History, Geneva, Switzerland, but according to Dr. Charles Ferriere it has apparently been lost.) Wheeler, 1908, Bull. Amer. Mus. Nat. Hist. 24: 400, *dealate female*.

Acanthostichus (Ctenopyga) texanus Forel, Emery, 1911, in Wytsman, Genera Insectorum, fasc. 118, pp. 13-14, *dealate female*. M. R. Smith, 1947, Amer. Midl. Nat. 37: 529, pl. 1, fig. 4, *dealate female*. Creighton, 1950, Harvard Univ., Bull. Mus. Comp. Zool. 104: 58-59, *dealate female*. M. R. Smith, 1951, in U. S. Dept. Agr. Mongr. 2, p. 782, *dealate female*.

Ctenopyga townsendi Ashmead, 1906, Proc. Ent. Soc. Wash. 8: 29-30, *dealate female, male*; fig. 4 (male), 4H (male hypopygium and pygidium of female), La Puerta (state unknown, but probably Chihuahua), Mexico, C. H. T. Townsend. (Types in the United States National Museum.) *New Synonymy*.

Acanthostichus (Ctenopyga) townsendi (Ashmead), Emery, 1911, in Wytsman, Genera Insectorum, fasc. 118, pp. 13-14, *dealate female, male*. M. R. Smith, 1942, Proc. Ent. Soc. Wash. 44: 62, *male*. M. R. Smith, 1943, Amer. Midl. Nat. 30: 283, 288-290, *male*, fig. 4, J (pygidium of male).

Texas

Brownsville (Cameron County), H. F. Wickham, a single *dealate female*. (Type locality for *Acanthostichus texanus* Forel.)

Brownsville, 8-12-53, collector?, in orchids from Mexico, 1 *male* (Lot 53-10081, Brownsville No. 74900).

Ten miles west of Boca Chica (Cameron County), 11-8-51, W. S. Creighton, partly *alate female*.

Rio Grande City (Starr County), 10-24-42, Wm. F. Buren, 2 *dealate females*.

Victoria (Victoria County), VI. 24, J. D. Mitchell, 1 *male*.

Hidalgo (Hidalgo County), 2-25-37, collector?, outside of bran sack from Mexico, 1 *male* (Lot 37-5199, Hidalgo No. 2081).

Mexico

La Puerta (state unknown, but possibly Chihuahua), 5-6-95, C. H. T. Townsend, 1 *dealate female*, 2 *males*. (Type locality for *Ctenopyga townsendi* Ashmead).